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**CORNING MAN SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 24 YEARS FOR  
METHAMPHETAMINE TRAFFICKING AND LYING TO THE JURY**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that MARGARITO RAMIREZ CABALLERO, 36, of Corning, Calif., was sentenced to 292 months in prison by United States District Judge Frank C. Damrell, Jr. for conspiracy and possession of methamphetamine with the intent to distribute. CABALLERO was convicted following a four-week jury trial that concluded on June 10, 2008.

This case was the product of a joint investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and Net-5, a drug task force made up of members from various law enforcement agencies in Yuba and Sutter Counties.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Philip Ferrari and Todd Pickles, who prosecuted the case, in December 2006 to February 2007, the DEA used an informant to negotiate the terms of a methamphetamine deal with an individual in Colusa, Calif. On February 24, 2007, six individuals traveled from Corning to Yuba City to make a delivery of approximately four pounds of methamphetamine. They traveled in three cars to a Wal-Mart parking lot, arriving just before midnight. CABALLERO drove a pickup containing two other persons, an SKS military rifle, and ammunition. Testimony introduced at trial established that CABALLERO was there to provide security for the deal. After other co-conspirators showed the informant the methamphetamine, law enforcement moved in and made arrests.

The quantity of drugs involved, the presence of firearms, and the fact that CABALLERO lied on the witness stand in his own defense were determining factors in the long sentence.

CABALLERO testified that he had only limited prior contact with his co-defendants and claimed to have traveled to Yuba City for reasons entirely unrelated to the drug deal. In commenting upon this testimony, Judge Damrell stated it was “unquestionably the case that the defendant intentionally misled the jury,” and it “showed the defendant was more involved than he was willing to admit” and was “deeply involved in the conspiracy.” CABALLERO is the first of the defendants to be sentenced in this case.

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